**Study Guide – Epic Hero and Epic Poem Test**

**What makes a poem an epic?**

An epic poem is a long, narrative poem recounting actions, travels, adventures and heroic episodes.

An epic poem has a protagonist (a good guy) who is heroically larger than life, and is usually a legend or national hero.

An epic poem reveals both the good and bad deeds of the hero.

An epic poem contains action, usually battles, which reveal the hero’s more-than-human strength and/or abilities.

An epic poem takes place in a wide range of settings.

An epic poem is a story where gods and lesser divinities or magical creatures plan an active role in the outcome of the actions.

An epic poem often begins in the middle of the action.

An epic poem contains long, formal speeches by important characters.

An epic poem often reveals important early background details later on in the story.

**Epic Hero Cycle**

1. **The main character is the hero, who has supernatural abilities or qualities.**
2. **The hero is charged with a quest.**
3. **The hero is tested, often to prove the worthiness of himself and his quest.**
4. **Mythical beings, magical and helpful animals, and human helpers and companions interact with the hero.**
5. **The hero’s travels take him to a supernatural world, often one that normal humans cannot enter.**
6. **The cycle reaches a low point where the hero nearly gives up his quest or appears defeated.**
7. **The hero is resurrected (brought back to “life”) in some way.**
8. **The hero achieves restitution, often regaining his rightful place on the throne.**